THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (d) Government had received complaints regarding over-charging of non-levy cement consumers in West Bengal by M/s. Associated Cement Companies Ltd. It was *inter-alia* alleged that the non-levy consumers in West Bengal were charged Rs. 71.37 plus local sales tax per bag as against the price of Rs. 65/- plus local sales tax printed on the bags containing cement manufactured by M/s. Associated Cement Companies Ltd. After the introduction of the scheme of partial decontrol with effect from 28-2-1982, cement is sold under two categories viz., levy and non-levy cement. While levy cement is subject to price and distribution control, non-levy cement is free from such control. However, the complaint was looked into. On examination of the complaint it was found that the subject matter of the complaint came within the jurisdiction of the State Government. The State Government have therefore, been requested to deal with the complaint with reference to West Bengal Packaged Commodities Rules, 1977.

Technology cell

966. PROF. B. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry had constituted the Appropriate Technology Cell in 1971;

(b) if so, what were the specific objectives of the cell;

(c) what were the major recommendations made by the Cell through its working groups and seminars; and

(d) what have been the activities and achievements of this AT Cell during the last five years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b) The Appropriate Technology Cell was constituted in the Ministry of Industry in 1971 and the specific objectives of the Cell are given in the enclosed statement (*See* below).

(c) and (d) Based on the recommendations of the Cell through its working groups and Seminars, several action projects for productivity improvement and technology upgradation were taken up in the following selected rural industries:—

1. Blue potteries of Jaipur (Rajasthan).

2. Decentralised lock industry of Aligarh.

3. Lacquerware Toy Making industry Chennapatna (Karnataka).

4. Processing of Sugarbeet industry in Sundarbans area of West Bengal.

5. Processing of Sabaigrass in Mayurbanj District of Orissa.

Statement

(i) To compile existing information available on appropriate technology;

(ii) to identify special areas wherein the methodology of appropriate technology would yield greater employment opportunities while at the same time safeguarding economic viability of the industry;

(iii) to carry out preliminary cost studies and other economic investigations either by itself or through other research institutions;

(iv) to farm out technological problems to research institutions;

(v) to coordinate the research projects and undertake field testing of prototype devised by them;

(vi) to negotiate with, industry regarding fabrication of models found acceptable after field testings;

(vii) to maintain close contacts with other institutions interested in the subject both in India and abroad; and

(viii) to encourage adoption of appropriate technological models in selected industries through various publicity media.